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men in Austria, Switzerland and Germany, and twelve in England. In Germany the college graduates take board in German families and attend the *Unter-* and *Oberprima* of a Realgymnasium; they stay eighteen months, but they must spend that time at two different schools. Before they return to France they send a detailed report of their experiences and observations to the minister of public instruction. Some of these reports which were communicated to Germans show that the young men generally maintain the most amicable relations both with their German fellow students and with the families in which they board. Their progress, furthermore, in learning the German language and in school exercises is very satisfactory.

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THE ANGLO-SAXON básnian
and *wrāsen*.

The Anglo-Saxon word *básnian*, 'to delay, tarry' etc., though rather odd in appearance, is not so obscure a formation as one might at first suppose. Whatever be the relation between the suffixes of the feminine abstract nouns such as the Gothic *sóknus* (suffix *-ni*) and *usbeisus* (suffix *-sni*), it is sufficient for the present purpose to accept the suffix *-sni* (in all probability at first developed in association with dental bases) as an extension of the simple form *-ni*. In accordance with this view Kluge in his *Nominale Stammbildungslehre* § 147 has classed the Gothic *usbeisus* < **usbeidsns*, *anabúsnus* < **anabúdsns* etc., with *sóknus*, *taiknus*, *siuns* etc. Kluge has also called attention to the ablaut-variation which is exhibited, for example, in *taiknus* and *usbeisus*. By the side, therefore, of **usbeidsni*- we may also place, as formed from the same base-group of the verb *bídan* (A. S.), the stem **baidnsni*-. From this we should in Anglo-Saxon obtain **básn* > **bāsen* 'an abiding, a delay,' the nominal base of the denominative verb *básnian*. In like manner do we find *wrāsen* (*inwit-wrāsen*, etc.) < **wraiddnsni*- by the side of the verb *wrīðan*. A verb **wrāsnian* could also have been formed.

JAMES W. BRIGHT.

MODERN LANGUAGES AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND.

Readers of MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES will be interested to hear of a meeting of great importance which has lately taken place at Cambridge University, England. The Congress of the National Society of French Professors residing in England was invited by the authorities to a session in the university at which the vice-chancellor and all the masters of colleges were present. The occasion was one of importance in a variety of respects. It was under distinguished patronage, the chairman being M. Waddington, the French ambassador to England, while among those who expressed their strong sympathy with the work of the Congress we meet the names of Lord Lytton (Minister to France), Lord Tennyson, MM. Jules Simon, de Lesseps, Arsène Houssaye, and Jules Ferry. M. Waddington delivered the inaugural address. He referred with pleasure to the recognition of the Congress by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and expressed the hope that modern languages would soon be placed upon an equal footing with classical and other subjects. Vice Chancellor Taylor emphasized the warm interest felt by the university in the study of French. The most important speech, however, was that made by Professor Seeley, the widely known occupant of the chair of modern history at Cambridge. Professor Seeley's long and varied experience and extensive knowledge make his remarks of special value. He believed that a crisis in education has arrived when it is necessary to accord to modern languages their true and prominent place in modern culture. Recognizing most strongly the value of the classics, "himself a classicist of the classics," he still thought that the needs of modern life were prepotently demanding very much more devotion to the study of modern languages than had ever yet been accorded them. So far from believing that Latin must be learned in order to teach French, "let us," he said, "teach French in order to learn Latin." He emphasized the immense value of French literature, "a literature not less but more extensive and various than the Greek and Roman literatures them-

selves." "It is absurd," he continued, "to claim the title of humanities exclusively for the classics, to consider that a youth cannot learn grace from Racine, austere purity from Pascal, eloquence from Rousseau, elevation and force from Victor Hugo, not to say from Dante and Goethe." Professor Seeley enumerated the various departments of activity in which the modern languages are of paramount importance, especially history; and strongly objected to the statement that in all respects the classics are the preferable object of study. "The modern literatures cannot be introduced by the ancient; but the ancient literatures can be included in the modern by means of translation." The speaker continued in the same strain, and upon closing his address was greeted with enthusiastic applause not merely by members of the Congress but by some of the dons and by a large body of the students. A banquet at King's College and a *conversazione* at Trinity College supplied the social element of the occasion. A general feeling of unanimity seemed to reign, both as to the hopeful prospect in regard to the academic study of modern languages, and as to the cessation of the all but monopoly which has so long obtained in favor of the classics in the great English universities.

The gentlemen entertained by the university were simply teachers of the French language and not, in any sense, a body of scholars engaged in the advanced study of modern linguistics, in either their scientific or literary aspect. It may fairly be presumed, then, that had the latter important phases of modern language study been duly represented in the Congress, its reception on this occasion would have been all the more enthusiastic and honorable. The scientific attention which the philology of modern languages is now so widely claiming would certainly have secured for a body representing original research as well as practical instruction the especially hearty endorsement of Cambridge University.

It is gratifying to call attention to these signs of the times. The prospects are certainly hopeful when the men who stand guard over the strongholds of classicism are thus frankly outspoken in favor of reform.

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THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE
MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA.

The Fifth Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association of America, held at Philadelphia on the 28, 29 and 30 of December, may be considered memorable in the annals of the Association for several reasons: the large number of members attending and the increase in membership; the practical nature of the majority of the subjects treated, and the uniform excellence of the papers; and last, though by no means the least important, the increasing interest which its discussions created in the minds of the more general public, as witnessed in the fulness of the reports of the daily papers. Representing, as such a society does, the progressive rather than the radical spirit of modern education, the extension of its audience to this more general public can not but be attended with the best results, in forming a public opinion which we trust may in some measure correct the utilitarian tendencies so widely prevalent in both our school and college curricula.

Although the order of exercises did not begin, strictly speaking, until Wednesday evening, December 28, Dr. William Pepper, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, received informally at his house, on Tuesday evening, such delegates as had already arrived. Quite a number availed themselves of Dr. and Mrs. Pepper's kind hospitality.

During Wednesday, in accordance with the provisions already made by the Local Committee, the delegates were enabled to visit such places of interest in and about Philadelphia as proved most attractive.

On Wednesday evening, the Association met at the University of Pennsylvania to listen to Provost Pepper's Address of Welcome, and to hear Professor James MacAlister in an address on "The Place of Modern Literature in the Education of Our Time." In the absence of James Russell Lowell, the president of the association, and of W. T. Hewett of Cornell University, the second Vice-president, Professor James M. Garnett, of the University of Vir-